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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KIGALI 001208

SIPDIS

USTR PASS TO CMILLER AND PCOLEMAN  
GENEVA FOR USTR - TAGLIANI

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ETRD](#) [PREL](#) [EAGR](#) [KTEX](#) [EINV](#) [RW](#) [AGOA](#)

SUBJECT: EMBASSY KIGALI PARTICIPATION IN SEVENTH  
ANNUAL RWANDAN TRADE FAIR

1. Summary. Post sponsored a booth at the seventh annual Rwandan Trade Fair that showcased Rwandan exports to the United States and provided information on the theme "Global Business Partners." The presentation, the first of its kind to be offered by any diplomatic mission in Rwanda, was well received by the Rwandan government and the business community. End summary.

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GLOBAL BUSINESS PARTNERS  
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2. The Government of Rwanda (GOR), through the Rwanda Private Sector Federation, held its seventh annual International Trade Fair August 7-15 in Kigali. Boasting over 240 vendors and businesses in and around Rwanda, the fair attracted over 100,000 visitors. The theme of the fair was "Producing For Export."

3. Post's Economic and Commercial Section sponsored a booth at the annual event, the first of its kind by any diplomatic mission in Rwanda. Under the theme "Global Business Partners," the booth highlighted current Rwandan exports to the United States and opportunities under the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). In addition, U.S. Mission staff provided hundreds of U.S. Foreign Commercial Service brochures and other information materials. A computer workstation was available for accessing information on BuyUSA.com via the Internet.

4. The USG-sponsored booth showcased a number of Rwandan products as export success stories under AGOA or Generalized Specialized Preferences (GSP). The items included handicrafts, baskets, textile goods, coffee, tea, peppers, and other agricultural products representing eight business organizations in Rwanda.

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POSITIVE IMPACT  
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5. The American booth attracted a great deal of favorable attention both with visitors at the fair and in local media. President Paul Kagame paid a personal visit to the booth and was impressed by the items displayed and American interest in Rwandan products. Rwandan television and newspapers lauded the positive impact of the Embassy's efforts to promote further exports from Rwanda to the United States. Moreover, hundreds of visitors, including several key ministers and elected representatives, took a keen interest in the booth, and many were surprised that items were already being exported to the United States. During closing ceremonies for the Trade Fair, Post received a trophy award for having made the most positive impact towards the overall fair theme of "Producing For Export."

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COMMENT  
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6. Comment: Rwanda's participation in AGOA has begun and continues to show great promise. Rwandan entrepreneurs and those with venture capital are beginning to take a strong interest in trade opportunities under AGOA and GSP. The GOR is also enthusiastic about supporting these efforts. With continued stability in the country, prospects are good for further expansion of exports under AGOA that will be important for Rwanda's overall trade balance. Export-oriented job growth will also help lead Rwanda away from aid dependence to greater integration into the global economy. Rwanda has a niche in that global economy that can be exploited to its advantage economically. Specialty coffee, exquisite basketry, spicy peppers, and beautifully sewn textile goods ranging from aprons to patch quilts can command a market niche and profit that can have a tremendous impact in this very poor country. American marketing

and distribution linkages are beginning to take root and will need to be cultivated and supported in every way possible. Americans also know about Rwanda and its efforts to rebuild from the horrible losses of the 1994 Genocide and war. Capitalizing on these advantages, Rwandan exports to the United States help build a free market economy here, create a stronger commercial partnership between the two nations, and hold the promise of a better life for thousands of impoverished Rwandan families. End Comment.

PATRICK